

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9791
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 24140

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, SOPN, TH, CH, JA, UR

SUBJ: THAI REACTION TO THE SIGNING OF THE SINO-JAPANESE
PFT

1. THAI PRESS COVERAGE OF THE SIGNING OF THE SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE. COVERAGE HAS CONSISTED OF REPRINTS OF ARTICLES FROM UPI AND REUTERS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT. SIGNING OF THE PFT IS VIEWED AS CONDUCIVE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF WORLD PEACE AND AS COUNTER TO INSTABILITY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC. PRESS CHARACTERIZED SIGNING OF THE PFT AS A BLOW TO THE SOVIET UNION.

2. THAI LANGUAGE DAILY NEWS SAID THAT "THE SIGNING OF A PEACE PACT BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN WAS A GREAT DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS FOR CHINA BECAUSE JAPAN SIGNED THE PACT IN THE FACE OF A STRONG WARNING FROM RUSSIA." THE AUTHOR BELIEVES THAT IN THE FUTURE CHINA WILL TRY TO FIND MORE FRONTS FOR OPPOSING SOVIET INFLUENCE.

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OTHER THAI LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS FOLLOWED LINE OF DAILY NEWS BUT TOOK A MORE ANTI-SOVIET TACK.

AFTER INDICATING THAT MOSCOW'S OBJECTIONS TO THE PFT WERE UNJUSTIFIED, THE NATION REVIEW COMMENTED EDITORIALLY AUGUST 14 THAT "AS COUNTRIES WITH CLOSE RELATIONS WITH JAPAN AND WITH BURGEONING RELATIONS WITH CHINA, THAILAND

AND FELLOW-MEMBERS OF ASEAN WILL WELCOME THE SIGNING OF THIS TREATY--AND ESPECIALLY THE ANTI-HEGEMONY CLAUSE--WITH GREAT HAPPINESS."

CHINESE LANGUAGE HSING HSIEN, TYPICALLY, COMMENTED IN ITS AUGUST 14 EDITORIAL THAT "BOTH CHINA AND JAPAN CONSIDER THAT THE SINO-JAPANESE PFT IS INSTRUMENTAL IN PROMOTING THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE PEOPLE AND MAINTAINING PEACE AND TRANQUILITY IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC AREA...SUCH A MOVE SHOWED A STEP FORWARD IN THE COURSE OF THE ANTI-HEGEMONY MOVEMENT AND CONSTITUTED A FORCE FOR SAFEGUARDING WORLD PEACE."

3. RTG POSITION, BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, HAS BEEN ONE OF WELCOMING THE SIGNING OF THE PFT. THE ANTI-SOVIET IMPLICATIONS OF THE PFT, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT BEEN PLAYED UP PUBLICLY BY THE RTG. PM KRIANGSAK IS REPORTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT "THE SIGNING OF A FRIENDSHIP TREATY BETWEEN THE PRC AND JAPAN IS GOOD NEWS BECAUSE IT WILL HELP RESTORE PEACE IN THIS REGION." PRESS ALSO CITED FONMIN UPPADIT AND DEPUTY PM BUNCHAI BAMRUNGPHONG AS SAYING THAT THE PFT WOULD HELP BRING PEACE AND STABILITY TO ASIA. MFA OFFICIAL AUGUST 17 IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS SAID THAT SIGNING OF THE PFT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE OF SOVIET EXPANSIONIST INTERESTS IN THE AREA.

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4. COMMENT: THAI REACTION SUPPORTS ENTHUSIASTICALLY THE CONCLUSION OF THE PFT AS PROMOTING REGIONAL STABILITY, AS A CONSTRAINT ON ANY CHINESE OR JAPANESE REGIONAL AMBITIONS, AND PARTICULARLY AS A MEANS FOR CURBING WHAT ARE SEEN HERE AS HEGEMONISTIC SOVIET AIDS IN ASIA.
ABRAMOWITZ

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